

Ukraine: Shelter Needs Assessment

An analysis of damage to homes and repair efforts

January 2023

Ukraine

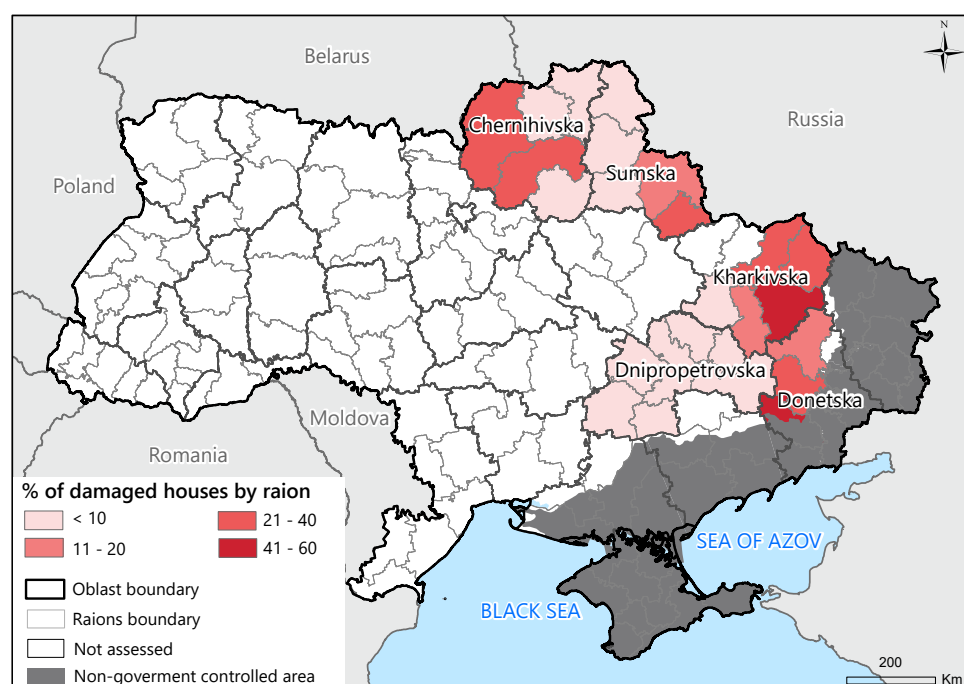
KEY MESSAGES

- Among the raions assessed, those with the most homes damaged were **Iziumskiy, Volnovaskiy, Kupianskiy, and Chernihivskiy**. (See Map 1)
- Of all interviewed households, **14% had damage to their homes** at the time of the interviews. Around a third of those reported major damage, nearly half reported minor damage, and around one in seven households had destroyed utility systems.
- **78% of households interviewed said they had insufficient income to meet their basic needs.** Over half of those households also had at least one member with an additional vulnerability, such as a disability or chronic illness.²
- Local NGOs engaged in repair work typically provided repair materials directly to households or hired contractors to perform the repairs. Many partnered with INGOs or the UN who do similar work and provided funding and resources to local NGOs, who were sometimes able to access more remote or dangerous areas.

CONTEXT & RATIONALE

According to the World Bank, as of 1 June 2022, **817,000 residential units across Ukraine were impacted by the war**, with 38% of them destroyed beyond repair.¹ Donetsk, Luhanska, Kharkivska and Kyivska oblasts were estimated to contain the bulk of the damaged homes. Needs for non-food items (NFIs) and access to electricity have also been concerns throughout Ukraine, especially during the colder winter months as attacks directed at infrastructure intensified. Newly accessible areas in Chernihivska and Sumska are still recovering from the damage done nearly a year ago, while oblasts nearer to the frontline continue to face regular attacks, causing continued destruction to homes and infrastructure.

Map 1: % of households with reported damage to their homes by raion



ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

To better understand the specific damage to housing and the needs for repair, REACH assessed 25 raions across five oblasts considered to have severe needs according to the Shelter Cluster: **Chernihivska, Dnipropetrovska, Donetsk, Kharkivska, and Sumska**. More details about included raions and the method of data collection may be found in Map 6.

METHODOLOGY:

25 raions were assessed, with a total of **1,503 household interviews** and **24 key informant interviews** with representatives of local government. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with **25 Ukrainian non-profit organisations** involved in shelter repair, NFI distribution, or related work. The findings should be interpreted as **indicative**.

Data was collected in January 2023.

OVERVIEW

Since the start of the full-scale war on 24 February 2022, significant damage has been done to residential dwellings across Ukraine. The World Bank estimated that as of June 2022, **over 817,000 residential units had been impacted by the war, with 38% of those destroyed beyond repair.**³ The 2023 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) estimated that there were 8.3 million people in need of shelter or non-food items (NFI) assistance across the country.⁴

While damage done to Chernihivska occurred almost entirely in February and March 2022, when Russia invaded from the north and occupied some parts of the oblast, shelling of Sumska, Kharkivska, Dnipropetrovska, and Donetska has continued throughout the past year. According to REACH's Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA), **Donetska, Chernihivska, and Kharkivska were among the five oblasts where households were more likely to report war-related damage.**⁵

Raions were chosen for this assessment based on those deemed to have the most severe shelter needs by the Shelter Cluster (see Map 6). Severity findings of this assessment largely align with the MSNA. In particular, Chernihivskiyi (Chernihivska oblast), Kramatorskiy, Pokrovskiy, and Volnovaskiyi (Donetska oblast), Iziumskiy, Kupianskiy, Chuhuivskiy, and Lozivskiy (Kharkivska oblast) and Okhtyrskiy (Sumska oblast) were found to have high percentages of damaged homes.

Throughout the country, the Shelter Cluster has nearly a hundred active partners, both international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and local NGOs.⁶ The cluster has over 15 implementing partners in Chernihivska, Kharkivska, and Donetska oblasts, and 10 in Sumska and Dnipropetrovska, and they estimate that around 1.5 million individuals have been assisted with some type of support, including repairs to dwellings, financial support, and NFI kits.

Despite this extensive coverage, many households throughout all raions assessed had repaired damages to their homes without any assistance, or with some help from family or friends. Only 3% reported receiving repair assistance from the government, though some households in Donetska and Sumska had received materials from a local NGO. Generally, the repair materials most frequently requested included reinforced plastic tarpaulins, oriented strand boards, mounting foam, and transparent plastic sheets. Wood, concrete, roofing materials, and glass were also requested by key informants, though a need for financial support was also raised.

Almost all interviewed households had faced challenges with electricity, with **over 85% of households in Sumska and Chernihivska reporting daily power cuts.** Authorities in many settlements reported using generators and/or scheduled blackouts to mitigate electricity shortages. Notably, the most requested NFIs at the time of the survey were solar lamps and thermal blankets - both items that are needed during blackouts.

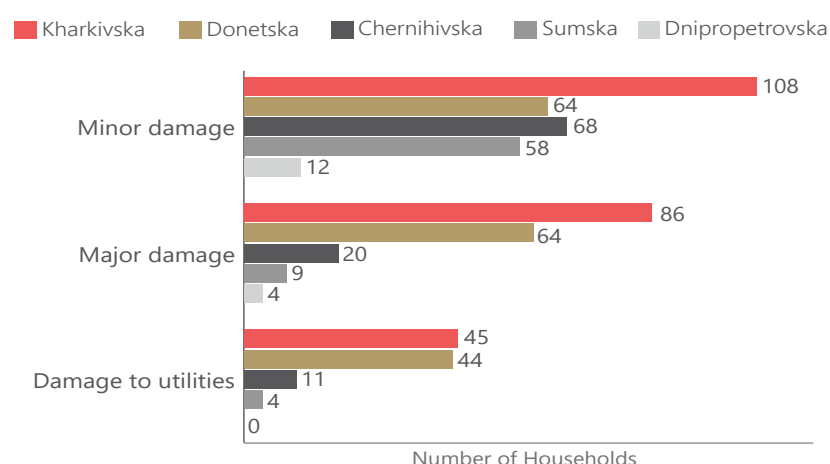
OVERALL FINDINGS

Of the 1,503 households assessed, 71% reported that they were living in their usual place of residence and had not left at any point during the past year. Another 10% reported having left for at least two weeks but had since returned to their usual place of residence, **7% were displaced because their homes had been destroyed**, and the remaining 11% were displaced for other reasons. More of the assessed households reported that their homes had been destroyed in Donetska (58% in Volnovaskiy, 15% in Kramatorskiy, 14% in Pokrovskiy) and Kharkivska (20% in Kupianskiy and Iziumskiy, 13% in Chuhuivskiy) than in the other assessed oblasts. One-third of assessed households had at least one member with a chronic illness and one-fifth had at least one member with a disability. Over 90% of assessed households said that there was adequate space in their current places of residence to allow privacy for women and girls.

At the time of the interviews, **14% of assessed households reported war-related damage to their homes.** The majority of those households (31%) said the damage had occurred in March 2022. Another 15% said the damage had occurred in February 2022. A quarter of households had been damaged at least 3 times in the past year.

Half the assessed households reported that it took less than 1 month to repair the damage, including some households with major damage. Three-fourths did the repairs themselves or with the help of friends/family, though some reported a lack in repair materials (see Figure 2). Another 11% reported performing the repairs with materials provided by either a local NGO or an INGO. As reported by the HNO,

Figure 1: Types of damage reported by households by oblast



Major damage: roofs, windows, doors, and/or walls needed complete reconstruction.
 Minor damage: roofs, windows, doors, and/or walls could be repaired without replacements.
 Damaged utilities: destroyed gas, electric, water, sewage, and/or heating.

humanitarian partners across Ukraine are facing challenges in accessing people in need due to the cessation of air travel and damage to transportation infrastructure, as well as the threat of air strikes, mines, and unexploded ordinances (UXOs). This is especially true of regions near the frontline, or in newly accessible areas where the threat of mines forces humanitarian organisations to travel only on main asphalt roads and thus limits the ability to reach people in need.⁷ This means that some of the most vulnerable households may not receive assistance.

Nearly all assessed households (93%) reported experiencing electricity cuts. Of those households, 68% reported multiple power cuts every day and another 11% had power cuts once daily. The majority (40%) said the blackouts usually lasted between 4 and 6 hours, though another 15% said they could last for more than 12 hours. Overall, only 8% of households reported owning generators. The highest proportion of households with generators was found in Kharkivska, where 14% of the assessed households reported owning generators.

Of all assessed households, 16% had received NFI kits from the UN or an INGO. Over half requested specific NFIs that they would like included in future kits (see Figure 3), but 40% reported that they already had everything they needed. This proportion was the highest in Dnipropetrovka (49%) and Sumska (42%) and the lowest in Donetsk (25%).

Figure 2: Most requested items for shelter toolkits*

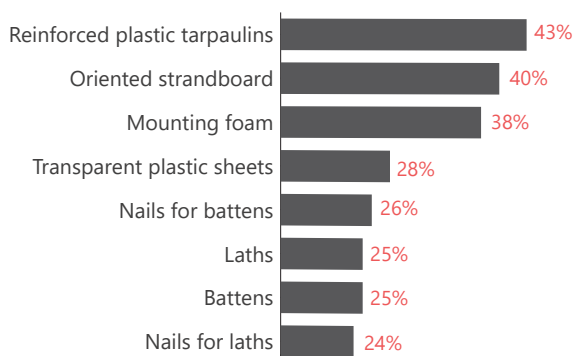
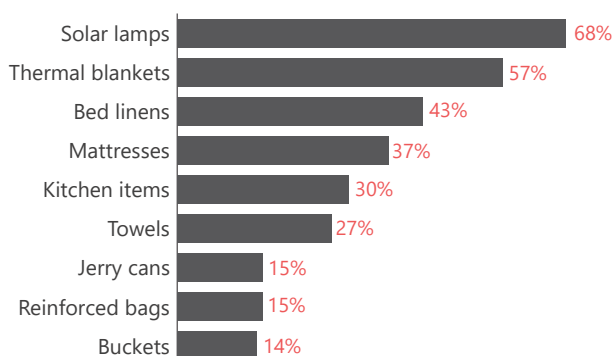


Figure 3: Most requested non-food items*



*Respondents could choose more than one option so totals will not add up to 100%.

The following four sections will more closely examine the situation in the four raions with the highest percentage of households that reported damage to their homes.

IZIUMSKYI RAION

Findings suggest that Iziivskiy raion in Kharkivska oblast may be one of the most damaged raions of those covered by this assessment. Just after the liberation of the city of Iziiv (the administrative capital of the raion), the mayor estimated that **80% of the city had been destroyed**, mainly referring to residential or high-rise buildings.⁸

The majority of interviewed households (n=33 of 55) were living in their own homes at the time of the interview. Another fifth (n=11) were not able to live in their homes due to the severity of the damage. Another fifth reported being displaced for other reasons. Over half of all households interviewed were living in a dwelling that was damaged, and **a quarter said their homes had been damaged at least 3 times since the February 2022.**

The main type of damage, reported by two-thirds of households, was major damage to windows and/or doors. Such damage was also reported to roofs and walls. Minor damage to these structures was reported by an additional third of

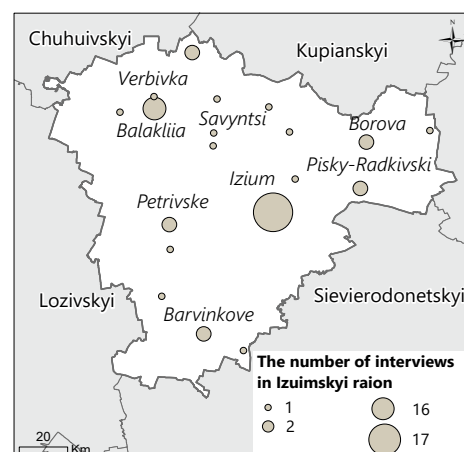
the households, and a quarter reported destroyed utility systems. **Almost half of these damages had reportedly occurred in March 2022** during the 4 week long Battle of Iziiv.

Nearly a third of households reported being able to repair at least some of the damages to their homes. The majority (n=13) had performed the repairs alone or with the help of family, friends, or neighbours. One household reported receiving materials from an INGO or the UN, while a few others had had their repairs performed by professionals sent by the government or an international aid organisation.

The most requested items for shelter toolkits were mounting foam, reinforced plastic tarpaulins, and nails for battens. A key informant from Kunye, a settlement north of Iziiv city, also iterated a need for roofing materials and wood, estimating that up to 25% of homes in the settlement needed repair work.

Just under half of households reported receiving NFIs, such as bed linens or

Map 2: Geographic distribution of Interviews in Iziivskiy raion



kitchen items, from an INGO. **Solar lamps and thermal blankets** were requested by over a third of households, but just under a third reported that they did not need any assistance related to NFIs. While most households did report electricity cuts (n=47), less than half reported these cuts on a daily basis, with most cuts lasting less than 6 hours.

VOLNOVASKYI RAION

Volnovaskyi raion in Donetsk oblast has seen continued damage over the course of the last year. Some of the raion is not under government control, with the rest of the raion being in close proximity to the frontline.

The majority of households interviewed (n=23 of 36) were unable to live in their own homes as they had been destroyed. Another third were displaced for other reasons. Half were living in a dwelling that was damaged at the time of the interview. The main type of damage, reported by over two-thirds of households with damage, was major damage to windows or doors. Such damage to roofs and walls was also reported by half of households. Around one-third reported destroyed utility systems, including gas or electric supply, heating systems, and/or water supply. Damages had occurred throughout most of the months since the full-scale war began, with **one third of households reporting that their homes had been damaged at least 3**

times.

Only 1 household reported being able to do any repairs, and this household performed the repairs independently, without any assistance from the government or an INGO, though the household did have the items needed to perform the repairs. The most requested items for shelter toolkits were **reinforced plastic tarpaulins, mounting foam, and transparent plastic sheets.**

Just under half of households had received NFIs from an INGO. **Solar lamps, thermal blankets, and bed linens** were the most requested items for future NFI distributions.

The majority of households (n=32) faced regular challenges with electricity. **Many (n=12) faced multiple electricity cuts per day, lasting up to 12 hours, and another quarter reported that they rarely or never had electricity at all, the highest proportion of all assessed raions.**

Map 3: Interviews in Volnovaskyi



Only about half of Volnovaskyi could be assessed as the other part is not under government control.

KUPIANSKYI RAION

Map 4: Interviews in Kupianskyi



liberation of the city, however, shelling continues and will likely result in continued damage to homes.

The majority of assessed households (n=36 of 55) were living in their own homes, but **a significant number (n=11) were unable to live in their homes as they had been destroyed.** Under half were living in a dwelling that was currently damaged. The main type of damage, reported by half of damaged households, was minor damage to roofs. Around a third of households reported major damage to roofs, walls, and/or windows and doors. Under a quarter had destroyed utility systems. The bulk of the damages had occurred in September, October, or November 2022. **Of those homes that had been damaged, some had been damaged at least 3 times.**

Only 5 of the households interviewed had been able to do any repairs on their homes. All had done the repairs independently or with the help of family or friends and said they had been able to access the necessary materials to perform the repairs on

their own. The most requested repair materials included **reinforced plastic tarpaulins, laths, and nails for laths.** A key informant in Kindrashivka also iterated a need for roofing materials, glass, and concrete, stating that more than 200 houses in the settlement had been damaged.

About a third had received NFIs from the UN or an INGO. The most requested items for future NFI distributions included **solar lamps, thermal blankets, and bed linens.**

Almost all households (n=53) faced regular electricity cuts. **Around a third experienced multiple electricity cuts per day, lasting up to 12 hours.** A smaller portion stated they never had electricity at all.

Kupianskyi raion, located in the easternmost part of Kharkivska oblast and bordering Russia, has seen repeated attacks since the full-scale war began. The week-long Battle of Kupiansk, which took place in early September, saw the city again under control of the Ukrainian government for the first time since February 2022. **A third of assessed households reported that the damage to their homes had occurred in September.** Despite the

CHERNIHIVSKYI RAION

On 24 February 2022, Russian forces began a takeover of the Chernihivska oblast. Parts of Chernihivskyi raion were under Russian control for over five weeks, during which significant damage was done throughout the raion.

Despite these early damages, the majority of households interviewed (n=46 of 58) were living in their own homes and had not left at any point. Another fifth had become displaced at some point but since returned. Only one assessed household was not able to live in their home due to its destruction.

However, **over a third of assessed households were living in a dwelling that was damaged at the time of the interview.** The main type of damage, reported by about half of damaged households, was minor damage to roofs and/or windows and doors. Less than a quarter of households reported major damage to roofs, walls, and/

or windows and doors, and very few had destroyed utility systems. **All households reported that the damage had occurred in February and March 2022,** during the Russian occupation of the raion. At that time, damages had been more severe, but nearly a year later it seems that many successful repairs have already taken place. A key informant in Berezna, a settlement to the east of Chernihiv city, said that all of the homes in the settlement had been repaired or were in the process of being repaired at the time of the interview.

Around one third of households reported having seen repairs on their homes. Most had done the repairs themselves, or with the help of family or friends. While some said they had been able to access the resources they needed for the repairs, **many pensioners reported that they were**

Map 5: Interviews in Chernihivskyi



unable to afford the materials they needed as they had insufficient income. Four households reported receiving repair assistance from either the local government or an INGO, and a fifth had received NFIs from the UN or an INGO.

NATIONAL NGOS

In order to better understand the situation on the ground and what local response efforts were in place, 25 national NGOs were consulted on their work and needs. The main type of work these NGOs were engaged in was the **distribution of humanitarian aid**, both NFIs and food items. NGOs involved directly in shelter repair typically did so through the provision of repair materials. The interviewed NGOs ranged from small (less than 10 employees) to national-level NGOs with coverage spanning multiple oblasts. In addition to work related to shelter and NFIs, some of the NGOs were also engaged in evacuating civilians from dangerous areas, providing specialised support to people with disabilities, and offering psychological support to vulnerable groups.

NGOs reported mixed levels of coordination with local authorities. Many said they had **good relationships with the local governments** of the raions in which they work, and they regularly received information from these authorities about people in need in the community. Local authorities also provided organisational and informational support. However, about a third of the NGOs interviewed indicated that they had no cooperation with local authorities, which led to a reduction in their scope of work. Another concern raised was a **lack of coordination in terms of beneficiary targeting**, meaning it was possible that some households were receiving assistance from multiple NGOs or INGOs and others were being missed.

Many NGOs also cooperated with a wide range of INGOs or UN agencies, though about a third did not report any such involvement. Those that did work with INGOs or UN agencies typically received **financial support**. In some cases, NGOs used this funding to **pay professionals to perform repairs**, however given that professional contractors can only work in safe areas with reliable road conditions, there may be gaps in humanitarian support for households closer to the frontline. NGOs also used funding for the **purchase of repair materials**. These materials were available in some markets in the assessed oblasts, so the main challenge for NGOs was to transport and deliver these materials to people in areas where they were not available, such as those nearer to the frontline. **More than a third of NGOs reported travelling on heavily damaged roads and/or through areas that experienced regular shelling or were at risk of landmines.** One NGO in Novhorod-Siverskyi, Chernihivska, said they had come under direct fire when delivering aid in August 2022. Despite these dangers, less than half of the NGOs had completed mine and UXO trainings. There was also a need for trainings in other areas, such as emergency first aid.

Although NGOs received funding from a variety of INGOs and/or local businesses, **lack of funding was cited as a challenge** to providing assistance by 14 of the 25 NGOs interviewed. Challenges in coordination with INGOs was mentioned a few times, specifically that in some cases international staff lacked specific contextual knowledge and required detailed and bureaucratic reporting from NGOs that could delay project implementation. In general, it seems that better communication between NGOs and INGOs regarding immediate needs and some flexibility with specific reporting requirements could be beneficial to the efficacy of the response.

METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

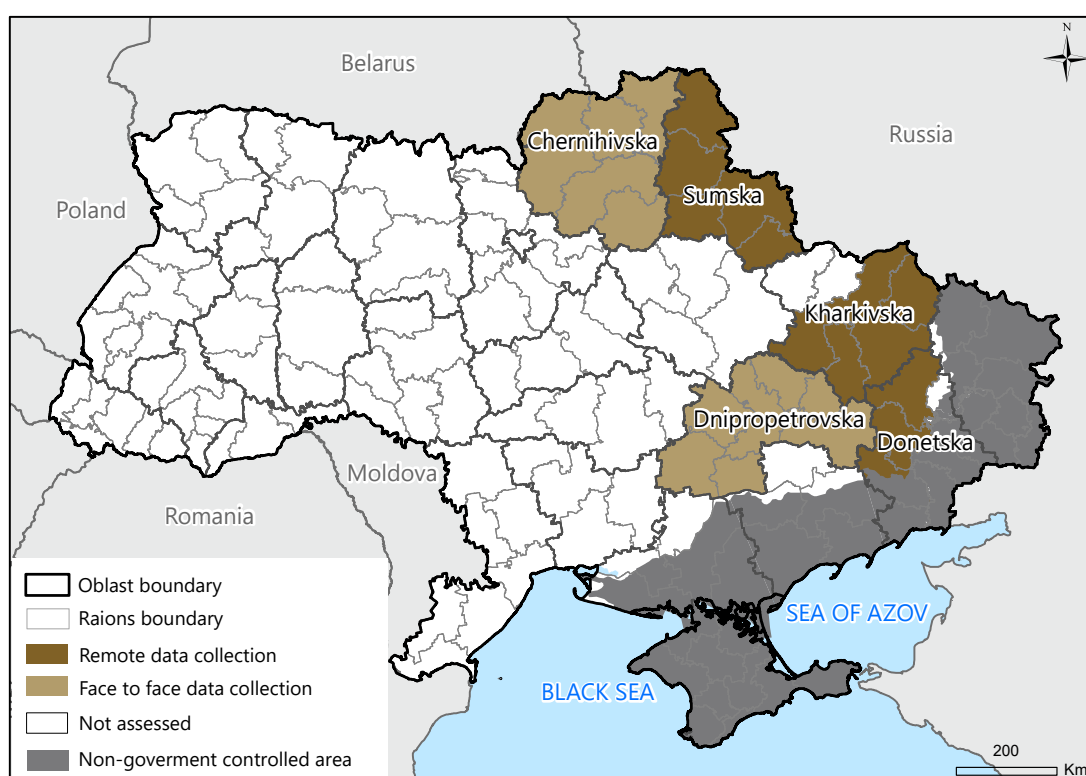
This data was collected using a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative household-level interviews were carried out with a minimum of **55 households per raion**, except in Volnovaskyi raion, where much of the territory is beyond the control of the Government of Ukraine, and only 36 interviews were collected. Additionally, there was **1 key informant interview per raion** with representatives of local authorities. Qualitative key informant interviews were carried out with **25 non-governmental organisations** working to help repair homes.

The raions selected for this assessment were those that scored as most severe on the Shelter Cluster Severity Index, as well as those that could be accessed by enumerators. Raions in non-government controlled areas or within a certain distance from the frontline were not able to be assessed. Additionally, areas recently liberated at the time of data collection, such as Kherson, were not accessible due to safety concerns and a lack of electricity.

These statistics **cannot be extrapolated to represent a proportion (%) of the population** and thus should be interpreted as **indicative** rather than representative.

ASSESSMENT COVERAGE

Map 6: Assessment coverage



ENDNOTES

- 1 World Bank, [Ukraine: Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment](#), August 2022
- 2 Vulnerabilities in this assessment included large families (3 or more children), single parents, pregnant women, minority group members, chronically ill people, older people, and people with disabilities.
- 3 World Bank, [Ukraine: Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment](#), August 2022
- 4 OCHA, [Ukraine Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023](#), December 2022.
- 5 REACH, [Ukraine: Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment](#), 2022
- 6 Shelter Cluster Ukraine, [2022 Response Dashboard](#), accessed March 2023
- 7 OCHA, [Ukraine Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023](#), December 2022.
- 8 The New Voice of Ukraine, [Izium 80% destroyed by Russian invaders, at least 1,000 civilians killed](#) September 2022.

ABOUT REACH

REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).